

City of San Jose

Coyote Valley Specific Plan

Task Force Meeting #7

151 West Mission Street, Room 202 a and b

Summary of the Meeting of
October 6, 2003

Task Force Members Present:

Mayor Ron Gonzales (co-chair), Councilmember Forrest Williams (co-chair), Christopher Platten, Chuck Butters, Dan Hancock, Don Gage (Supervisor), Eric Carruthers, Jim Cunneen, Ken Saso, Neil Struthers, Pat Dando (Vice Mayor), Russ Danielson, and Terry Watt.

Task Force Members Absent:

Craige Edgerton, Doreen Morgan, Helen Chapman, Gladwyn D'Souza, Steve Speno, and Steve Schott Jr.

Community Members Present:

Len Grilli, Anne Saso, Roger Costa, Janet Gutierrez, Brenda McKenry, Pat Sausedo, Shonnon Werner, Tim Muller, Jack Kuzia, Steven Kinsella, Rob Oneto, Rachael Gibson, Susan Mineta, Kerry Williams, Ed Janke, Tim Connolly, and Beverly Bryant

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Members Present:

Bobbie Fishler, Michael Bomberger, Ann Draper, and Jessica Fitchen.

City and Other Public Agencies Staff Present:

Jennifer Malutta (Mayor's Office), Emily Moody (District 2), Denelle Fedor (District 10), Laurel Prevetti (PBCE), Darryl Boyd (PBCE), Sal Yakubu (PBCE), Sally Zarnowitz (PBCE), Dave Mitchell (PRNS), and Rachel Gibson (Supervisor Gage's Office).

Consultants:

Jodi Starbird (David J Powers & Associates), Tom Armstrong (HMH), Jim Thompson (HMH), Julia Moriarty (Engeo), Colin Busby (Basin), and Stason Foster (Lowney).

1. Welcome

The meeting convened at 5:40 p.m.

Co-chair Mayor Ron Gonzales opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance to the seventh meeting of the Coyote Valley Specific Plan Task Force. Members of the Task Force then introduced themselves.

2. Acceptance of August 11, 2003 Meeting Summary

Co-chair Mayor Ron Gonzales called for a motion to accept the meeting summary for September 8, 2003. Task Force member Neil Struthers requested that the summary be amended to reflect his attendance of the September 8 Task Force meeting. The correction was noted. A motion was made to accept the summary with this change and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Task Force Information Binders

Sal Yakubu, a Principal Planner in the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, presented the task force with information binders. The binders were stocked with up-to-date information and handouts previously distributed at Task Force meetings. Sal explained that the binders were organized by specific plan tasks consistent with the work plan, with each task subdivided by task force meeting dates. This uniform organization would allow Task Force members to efficiently file and locate meeting materials.

4. Progress Report #3: Cultural Resources

Sal Yakubu indicated that the Coyote Valley Specific Plan (CVSP) is still in the background assessment phase. He explained that the second series of monthly reports are being presented today, consisting of cultural resources, geology, and hazardous materials. The reports would be presented respectively by Colin Busby of Basin Research, Julia Moriarty (Engeo) and Stason Foster (Lowney). Mayor Ron Gonzales then introduced the first of the three consultants, Colin Busby of Basin Research, for the progress report on cultural resources.

Colin begun his presentation by explaining that the purpose of the cultural resources study was to obtain general information regarding existing and potential cultural resources in the Coyote Valley Specific Plan area, and to provide any specific data that will assist planners during land planning. He said cultural resources include prehistoric and historic archeological resources, historic buildings and structures, and sacred resources and areas traditionally used by native American peoples. These resources are evaluated by using various criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources, and the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance.

The majority of Coyote Valley consists of flat agricultural lands and some marsh areas along the creeks. Human activity and settlement in Coyote extends back to between 5,000 and 7,000 years in the form of historic trails, and a number of villages surrounded by temporary camps. Beginning in the mid-1700s the area was traversed by Spanish explorers and largely used for agriculture and cattle grazing. The Mexican period of the 1800s saw the establishment of the transportation/stagecoach and rail lines and the advent of the agricultural Hamlet of Coyote. In general, there are about 105 cultural resources on file including results of inventories, building evaluations and archeological excavations, 24 archeological sites, one National Register listed site, and one potential historic district – the Hamlet of Coyote. In conclusion, Colin stated that the area has a high sensitivity for prehistoric resources. He said there could be historic archeological resources, and concluded that there were no Spanish and Mexican period buildings present, nor any significant surviving structures from the early American period. Potential future tasks include a complete archival identification effort, listing and mapping of potentially significant resources, and developing potential conditions and mitigation measures for future development.

The Task Force asked questions about the sensitivity of burial sites and data assemblage in the Greenbelt. In response to the first question Colin explained that burial sites would require special handling during the development of specific sites. In most cases the extent of the process depends largely on the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) who is appointed by the Native American Heritage Commission in consultation with the Native American community. The MLD monitors the site to ensure the sanctity and proper handling of any Native American remains and cultural resources encountered in the course of the development.

In response to the Greenbelt question, the Mayor explained that the area was included in the specific plan to enable the Task Force to formulate strategies to maintain it as a permanent greenbelt, and that the Greenbelt would not be slated for development. Staff added that depending upon the nature of the technical question, data will be compiled for the Greenbelt if it helps inform development opportunities and/or constraints in the north and mid-Coyote Valley areas. For example, flooding and hydrology needs to consider the entire Coyote Valley.

5. Progress Report #4: Geology

The Mayor introduced Julia Moriarty of Engeo to present the progress report on the preliminary geotechnical/geological evaluation for the Coyote Valley Specific Plan area. Julia explained that the goal of the preliminary evaluation was to develop a general geologic setting of the entire valley, discuss potential geotechnical/geologic hazards and soil/bedrock conditions and develop preliminary conclusions. She described the potential geotechnical/geologic hazards present in the area that could affect development. These include seismic (faulting, ground shaking, earth-induced liquefaction and earth-induced lurching and lateral spreading), and other hazards (expansive soils, landsliding, existing fills, and creek bank erosion). The preliminary evaluation process was completed by employing three different techniques. These included site reconnaissance, review of aerial photographs dating back to the 1950s, and the review of published geologic maps. Julia explained that the valley floor is generally composed of sands, gravel, cobbles, silts and clays deposited over two to four million years. These soils are generally found along the northwest/southeast axis of the site in thickness ranging from 200 to 400 feet. The surrounding hills consist of shallow soil over bedrock, while the depth of groundwater ranges from five to 15 feet in the northwest to 40 to 90 feet in the southeast of Coyote Valley. There are no active faults across the site and therefore fault rupture is unlikely. As with the rest of the Bay Area, ground shaking is expected in earthquakes. Similarly, there is a high to very high potential for earthquake-induced liquefaction, and a low to high potential for earthquake induced lurching and lateral spreading. In conclusion, Julia explained that the Valley was not unique from a geotechnical/geological standpoint, and north and mid Coyote Valley are technically suitable for development. However, she said site specific explorations are necessary at the development stage to determine actual soil and bedrock conditions.

In response to Task Force questions about recent incidents of landsliding in the area, Julia responded that the only evidence was for slippage due to faulting. She explained that none of the mapped areas was active.

6. Progress Report #5: Hazardous Materials

Finally, the Mayor introduced Stason Foster, of Lowney Associates to present the hazardous materials study. Stason said the purpose of the study was to obtain general information regarding the current and historic uses of the specific plan area, and to identify those uses that could potentially impact soil and ground water quality. He explained that hazardous materials include gasoline, diesel, oil, pesticides, and metals (such as lead and arsenic), as well as various kinds of solvents. Techniques employed in completing the study included a drive-by survey, review of historic aerial photographs dating back to the 1930s, and the review of known databases for recorded fuel leaks, hazardous materials storage and disposal records. Stason explained that there were approximately 75 sites with reported spills or where hazardous materials use was observed or suspected. These sites include former gasoline stations, commercial uses and farms with above ground or underground storage tanks, auto and equipment service facilities, and construction

related businesses. While no superfund sites or areas of large known spills were found, a few areas of potential concern would need to be evaluated further prior to future development. These include potential chemical contamination in soil or groundwater due to the previous use of pesticides, septic systems at commercial facilities, asbestos and lead paint in old structures, and lead and other metals in the vicinity of railroad tracks and roadways.

7. Public Comments

Jessica Fischen of the Greenbelt Alliance informed the Task Force that her organization has released a vision for Coyote Valley. She explained that the vision could be used as a resource for the Task Force in the planning process. She said the Greenbelt Alliance has also prepared a set of planning principles and statements based on that vision. Jessica said the statement of principles (see attached letter dated October 15, 2003) would be submitted to the Task Force at a later date, and urge the Task Force to consider it in its deliberations on land planning.

Brenda McKenry of the League of Women Voters read a letter to the Task Force from her organization. The letter, which was signed by the president of the League, Virginia Holtz, urged, amongst other items, that the Task Force should address a number of environmental, economic and developmental concerns in the preparation of the specific plan. The letter dated October 6, 2003 is attached.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at about 6:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2003, and the one following is December 8, 2003.